A TRUE

RELATION

OF THE

Engagement

OF HIS

MAJESTIES FLEET

UNDER

The Command of His Royal Highneſs,

WITH THE

Dutch Fleet,

May 28. 1672.

In a LETTER from *Hen: Savile* Eſq;
on Board His Royal Highneſs, to the Earl
of *Arlington*, Principal Secretary of State.

Published by Authority.

In the *SAVOY*:
Printed by *Tho. Newcomb.* 1672.

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Of His Majesties Fleet, under the Command of His Royal Highness, with the *Dutch Fleet*,

May 28. 1672.

My Lord,

THe frequent commands I have received from your Lordship for an Account of our late Engagement, exact enough to be made publick, do at last end in this following *Narration*, which had been sent you sooner, if the Weather, and many other Accidents that Seamen are liable to, had not hindred us from having such Accounts from every *Flag*, as were necessary to make up one fit for your Lordship, and those you intend to impart it to; whom I will suppose to be Landmen, for my own excuse: For, if I were to give such a Relation as would fully satisfie Seamen, the terms themselves concerning Tacking and Wind, *&c.* without any thing material relating to the Matter, would be too voluminous, to expect it should find a *Reader* out of *Wapping* or *Rotherith*. All that I pretend to, is Brevity and Truth; for the first, I must make it good as I can; for the other, I have such Witnesses as are unquestionable.

Our whole Fleet being at Anchor in *Southwold-Bay*, taking in Water, on Tuesday the 28th of *May*, betwixt Two and three a Clock in the Morning, the Wind E. by N. a small Gale, one of our Scouts came in, giving the usual Signals of seeing the Enemy; upon which, His Royal Highness immediately gave those of weighing Anchor, and getting under Sail, which was performed with all the speed possible, considering the short warning; for before Seven the whole *Blew* Squadron were a Head of the *Red*, and the *White* a Stern; in which order, and at which time, the Battle began, the Enemy having the Wind of us. The Squadron under *Bankaert* being the Van of their Fleet, attacked the *French*, which made the Rear of ours, they both separated themselves from both their Fleets, and so continued engaged out of our sight almost the whole day, Sailing to the Southward: At first *Bankaert* came briskly down upon Monsieur d'*Estrees*, but afterwards finding it too hot, kept at a greater distance.

The Earl of *Sandwich* with the *Blew* Squadron in the Van of our Fleet, was attacked by *Van Ghent*, in the Rear of theirs, and endeavoring to get the Wind of the Enemy, found so great opposition, that after having sunk a Man of War which laid him on Board, having above half his men killed, his Ship wholly disabled, and having put off two Fireships, was no longer in a condition to put off the third, which burnt her; the onely Ship we lost the whole day: His Lordship, and all the Officers, except Capt. *Haddock*, being lost with her; of which some few ordinary Men that were saved by Swimming to our Ships and Boats, give us no farther Account.

The *Henry*, that was one of her Seconds, commanded by Capt. *Digby*, Son to the Earl of *Bristol*, having put off several Fireships; most of her Men, her Captain, and almost all her Inferior Officers slain, fell into the hands

hands of the Dutch; but was in a little time retaken, and sent safe into Harbor by Capt. *Strickland* in the *Plimouth*.

Sir *Joseph Jordan*, Vice Admiral of the *Blew*, pursued the design his Admiral did not live to finish, and succeeded in it, getting the Wind of the Enemy, which he and his Division kept the rest of the day.

The Body of their Fleet commanded by Monsieur *de Ruyter*, attacked the Body of ours, commanded by His Royal Highness: De Ruyter was [illegible]

Print Faded and Illegible in parts.

[illegible] put up a new Standard, which because of the great smoak, could not be seen well enough to be attended by his Division. About this time, the Royal *Katherine* newly come from the River with fresh Men, and wanting many of the Conveniencies necessary for her defence, was boarded and taken by the Enemy, her Capt. Sir *John Chichely* being carried prisoner on Board their Ships; but the Enemy leaving no great number of Men in her, they were afterwards overpowred by ours, who carried the *Dutch* that had taken her, prisoners, and the Ship safe into Harbor. His Royal Highness continued on his way, attended by the *Phenix*, Capt. *Le Neve* Commander, on Head of him, and the *Fairfax* Capt. *Leg* Commander, and the *Victory* the Earl of *Ossory* Commander close a Stern, till after-

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wards Capt. *Berry* in the *Reſolution*, and Sir *Fretchevile Holles* in the *Cambridge*, came alſo on Head of us, but were both very ſoon diſabled, the latter having alſo loſt her Commander; the Earl of *Oſſory* in the *Victory* took their places; the Engagement being very hot all this time. Towards Five in the Evening His Royal Highneſs obſerving his Ship to Sail heavily, the *London*, and many of the Vice-Admirals Diviſion having overtaken the St. *Michael*, found upon enquiry that ſhe had ſix foot Water in the Hold; ſo that with the ſame Company he brought thither, except his Pilot, who was killed there, he carried his Standard on Board the *London*, Sir *Edward Spragg* Commander; where after fighting an hour or two with the Ships to Windward, they were forced to bear down, and gave opportunity to the Duke and Sir *Joſeph Jordan* to joyn; at which time *de Ruyter* put out a Signal, upon which all his Fleet bore down to joyn the *Zealanders*, who with others had engaged the *French* all day; who being to Leeward, did as well as it was poſſible for them to do with the diſtance, the *Dutch* being to Windward, kept from them. Thus ended the Battle, and the Day; The Duke with about Thirty Sail kept to Windward of the *Dutch* all night, ſtanding to the S. E. and found himſelf ſtill ſo the next morning; and ſo continued till about Six a Clock; when ſeeing ſome Ships a Stern, upon ſuppoſition, they were the Remainders of our Fleet, His Royal Highneſs tacked and ſtood with them, and found them to be as he gueſt, and the Whole *French* Squadron with them; about Seven he returned to his own Ship, as well refitted as was poſſible by the care of Captain *Narbrough*.

About Ten the whole Fleet were together, and about Twelve we ſaw the *Dutch* ſtanding after us, upon which we Tacked, having the Weather-Gage, and ſtood to them, in hopes of Engaging them preſently:

But,

But, when the Van of our Fleet was come up to the Body of theirs, they Tacked, and ſtood back towards their own Coaſts; Notwithſtanding which we had certainly engaged them, had we not been prevented about Three a Clock by a ſudden Fogg, which laſted till Six; and though it then cleared up, it blew ſo freſh, and was ſo late, and ſo near their Baucks, that we did not think it ſafe to Attacke them, but continued Sailing by them almoſt within Canon ſhot till Nine at Night; when, being within a League of the *Oyſter-Banck*, off the Coaſt of *Zealand*, we Tacked, and ſtood till Three in the Morning to the North-weſt, at which time we ſtood back till Six, to ſee if we could perceive the Enemy, which not diſcovering, we Anchored till the Afternoon, that we got under Saile, and ſtood back to our own Coaſt, being very ſtormy weather.

As for our Loſſes, Beſides the *Royal Iames*, there is not one Ship loſt, though ſeveral Commanders ſlain; The Earl of *Sandwich*, Mr. *Digby* Captain of the *Henry*, Sir *Fretcheville Holles* Captain of the *Cambridge*, Sir *Io. Cox* Captain of the *Prince*, Captain *Pearce* of the *St. George*, Captain *Waterworth* of the *Anne*, Captain *Hannam* of the *Triumph*, Captain *Tennes* of the *Alice* and *Francis* Fireſhip, and Monſieur *de la Rabiniere* Rear-Admiral of the *French*, Captain *Elliot* of the *York*, Captain *Lindman* of the *Monck*; and two of the *French* Captains, Monſieur *des Ardans*, and Monſieur *du Meſnon* are wounded; ſeveral Lieutenants and inferior Officers are killed, whoſe Names it were too tedious a buſineſs to ſet down. Of the Volonteers of Note, My Lord *Maidſtone*, Mr. *Montague*, Mr. *Richard Nicholls*, and Mr. *Roger Vaughan*, both of his Royal Highneſſes Bedchamber, Mr. *Trevanian* His Gentleman-Uſher, Sir *Philip Cartwright*, Sir *Charles Harbord*, Captain *Bromley*, Captain *Bennett*, Mr. *Cotterel*, Captain.

tain *Burgh*, Captain *Barry*, Mr. *Napier*, Brother to a Scotch Lord of that Name, Mr. *Bowles*, *le Chevalier de Serand*, and *le Chevalier de Bezy* are killed; and, if there are any others, their Names are not yet come to our Knowledge: Mr. *Tuſton*, Monſieur *le Comte de Canaples*, *le Chevalier de Chaſteaumourant*, Monſieur *Eſcorbiac*, Mr. *Wren*, Mr. *Hamilton*, Mr. *Howard*, Mr. *Skelton*, and Mr. *Hall* are all Wounded, Mr. *May* hath loſt his Arme.

The Advantage we have over the Enemy conſiſts in a Man of Warr taken of 48 Guns, called the *Steveren*, Commanded by one *Elzevir*; Another taken, but afterwards ſunck (being Leaky) of 52 Guns, called the *Ioſua*, Commanded by *John Dyche*; A Third Sunck by the Earl of *Sandwich*; A Fourth by Sir *Edward Spragg*, both betwixt 60 and 70 Guns; a Fireſhip taken, and we forced them to Spend moſt of the reſt, without doing us any dammage: We have very good grounds to believe we have ſunck more, and amongſt the reſt a Flagſhip; but, thinking it better to erre on the modeſt ſide, I onely write Matter of *Fact*; and, leaſt I ſhould break my Word in the other Article, (I mean of Brevity) I Humbly kiſs your Hands, and am,

My Lord,

Your Lordſhips moſt Faithful,
and moſt Obedient Servant

From on Board the *Prince*,
near the *Middle Ground*,
June 6. 1672.

H. Savile.

The

THe Writer of this Letter, could not think fit to mingle in his Relation, any Expreſſions of His Royal Highneſs's Perſonal Behavior, becauſe it was prepared for his own ſight: But it is moſt certain, That never any Prince, or it may be as truly ſaid, any Private perſon, was in an Action of War, expoſed to more danger from the beginning to the end of it; His Conduct and Preſence of Mind, equalling his Fearleſs Courage, and carrying him to change his Ship three times, ſetting up the Royal Standard in each of them, to animate his own Men, and to brave the Enemy.

SInce the writing of this Letter, is brought in an Account of the Killed and Wounded.

The number Killed, amounting at the moſt to, between Seven and eight hundred;

And the Wounded to about as many: Beſides thoſe that were loſt in the *Royal James*.

The Loſſes on the part of the Enemy, are in this particular, as in all others, kept very ſecret; onely they do own from all hands, That they have had as many Men Killed and Wounded in this Engagement, as in any two Battles before.

FINIS.